

volume could be kept within reasonable limits as to bulk, and at the same time permit the incorporation into it of the seventy pages of new matter, embracing the recent additions that have been made to our knowledge of human physiology.

Every portion of the work presents evidence of careful revision, while many of the chapters have been entirely re-written, so as to render it throughout "a faithful reflection of the present state of physiological science."

The American editor has added an occasional illustration of the author's text, and notices of such discoveries as have been announced subsequently to the issue of the work in England—thus bringing it up more fully to the present day. With Dr. Smith, we confidently believe, "that the present will more than sustain the enviable reputation already attained by former editions, of being one of the fullest and most complete treatises on the subject in the English language." We know of none from the pages of which a satisfactory knowledge of the physiology of the human organism can be as well obtained, none better adapted for the use of such as take up the study of physiology in its reference to the institutes and practice of medicine.

D. F. O.

ART. XXII.—*History of the American Medical Association from its Organization up to January, 1855.* By N. S. DAVIS, M. D., Professor of Principles and Practice of Medicine, and Clinical Medicine in Rush Medical College, etc. etc. etc. To which is appended *Biographical Notices, with Portraits of the Presidents of the Association, and of the Author.* Edited by S. W. BUTLER, M. D. 8vo. pp. 191. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1855.

WHETHER the American Medical Association is destined to be a permanent institution, that, after having by perseverance accomplished the primary objects of its organization, shall continue a bond of union and of strength, for the protection of the rights and the furtherance of the interests of the medical profession throughout the United States—increasing in dignity, influence, and efficiency with each year that is added to its age, or whether from some unforeseen and unanticipated cause it shall, sooner or later, cease to exist, still must its organization and its doings ever form prominent and most interesting items in the history of our profession in this country.

Long or short lived as the Association may be, it has already given a proper direction to many of the things that most deeply affect the prosperity of our profession, and has made upon it, throughout, an impression, the salutary influence of which cannot be easily or speedily counteracted.

It is true that, in its attempts to work out the problem of reform in medical education, it has been encountered by contending and discordant interests, which it has not yet been able to conciliate; and yet, even in this department of its operations, facts incontestably prove that its efforts have not been without a beneficial result—far short, unquestionably, of what was anticipated from them, in the outset, but still sufficient to create the hope that, by steady perseverance, the Association may ultimately succeed in the entire accomplishment of all its plans of reform.

Look upon it in whatever light we may—as an experiment destined to end in a total failure, or as an organization the operations of which have been so far beneficial, and are destined to become still more so in the future, the history of the American Medical Association is, and always will be, a subject of deep interest to the American physician, and we are therefore pleased that Dr. Davis, whose name is identified with the Association from its origin—has undertaken the task of recording its history, which he has accomplished with great ability and perfect impartiality.

As the work of Dr. Davis has doubtless found its way, before this, into the hands of the major portion of our readers, it is unnecessary for us to enter into an examination of its contents. The author presents a plain, unvarnished

narrative of the causes which led to the organization of the Association, and of its proceedings—the subjects discussed, the plans digested, and the recommendations and suggestions adopted, at its several sessions, from the preliminary meeting in 1846, to that of May, 1854, inclusive. In an appendix, short biographical notices are given of the eight gentlemen who have served as Presidents of the Association, and of its historian.

We would say to those who have not yet become possessed of the work before us, to do so without delay, and give to it a careful perusal; for we are desirous that every medical man in the country should become acquainted with the character and doings of the Association, as we would wish to enlist every one on its behalf, as well for the general benefit of the profession at large, as for that of each of its members individually, and we know of no more certain means of effecting this than by promoting the circulation of Dr. Davis's history.

D. F. C.

ART. XXIII.—*The Obstetric Memoirs and Contributions of JAMES Y. SIMPSON, M. D., F. R. S. E., Professor of Midwifery in the University of Edinburgh, etc. etc.* Edited by W. O. PRIESTLEY, M. D., Edinburgh, formerly Vice-President of the Parisian Medical Society, and HORATIO R. STORER, M. D., Boston, U. S., one of the Physicians of the Boston Lying-in Hospital. Members of the Medico-Chirurgical and Obstetric Societies of Edinburgh, etc. etc. Vol. I. 8vo. pp. 756. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1855.

This is a very acceptable work. Although the greater portion of the memoirs and contributions embraced in it have already appeared, at various times, in the British journals of medicine, and several of them have been copied into those of our own country, yet, taken as a whole, they constitute so valuable and important a contribution to obstetric pathology and practice, that it was desirable they should be collected and arranged for their presentation in a form that would render them acceptable to the members of the profession generally.

The character and standing of Professor Simpson as an obstetrician, and his experience in the treatment of the diseases peculiar to the female, have given to his opinions, on everything connected with the conduct of labour, in the varied circumstances under which it may occur, as well as with the pathology and management of the various affections of the reproductive organs of woman, an authority not surpassed by any previous or contemporary writer on those subjects. With these opinions every American practitioner must desire to be acquainted, which desire the collection of the professional writings of that gentleman, and their presentation in their present permanent and accessible form, will enable them to satisfy.

The several memoirs and essays included in the present publication have been republished under the immediate supervision of Dr. Simpson—two or three of the older papers have been almost entirely rewritten by him. Besides those that have already appeared in the medical journals, the collection will also contain a number of entirely new contributions.

The papers, in place of being arranged in the order of their original publication, are classified according to their subjects. The present volume comprises those having relation to the special pathology of the unimpregnated female, to the physiology and pathology of pregnancy, and to natural and morbid parturition.

Under each of these heads will be found papers of deep interest and great practical importance. The entire collection is deserving of a careful perusal on the part of every practitioner engaged in the general duties of his profession.

The junior editor, Dr. H. R. Storer, of Boston, in the preface to the American edition of Dr. Simpson's professional papers, enumerates, as the most important of that gentleman's contributions, the proposition to extract the placenta before the child in certain cases of placenta previa; the use of alkaline salts in pla-